

Message Text

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13

ACTION NEA-12

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CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 USIA-15 PRS-01

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R 040610Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9954

INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IS

SUBJ: AMB'S CONVERSATIONS WITH MINISTERS KIL & HAZANI

1. DURING MY INTRODUCTORY CALL ON MINISTER OF TOURISM AND LEADER INDEPENDENT LIBERAL PARTY (ILP) MOSHE KOL ON OCT 2, I SOUGHT HIS VIEWS ON PROSPECTS FOR THE UPCOMING KNESSET ELECTIONS AND THE IMPACT OF THE GALILI DOCUMENT ON PEACE PROSPECTS.

2. KOL STATED THAT HE WAS HOPEFUL THAT THE ILP WOULD WIN TWO ADDITIONAL SEATS IN THE OCT 30 ELECTIONS, BRINGING ITS TOTAL REPRESENTATION TO SIX, AND THAT THE LABOR-MAPAM ALIGNMENT WOULD HOLD ITS OWN. THIS RESULT WOULD ENABLE THE LABOR PARTY TO BE LESS DEPENDENT ON THE SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY IN THE NEXT GOVERNING COALITION.

3. THE MINISTER CONFIRMED THAT THE ILP WILL REINTRODUCE ITS CIVIL MARRIAGE LEGISLATION IN THE NEXT KNESSET AND THAT THIS WILL BE THE MAIN ISSUE IN ITS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE LABOR PARTY FOR FORMATION OF THE NEXT COALITION.

4. REGARDING THE RIGHTWING BLOC LIKUD, KIL TOLD ME THAT HE HAD JUST WRITTEN A LETTER TO HAARETZ COMMENTATOR AMMON RUBINSTEIN, WHOSE ARTICLES HAD EXTOLLED THE NEW BLOC AS A CONTRIBUTION TO ISRAELI DEMOCRACY, IN WHICH HE ASKED HOW ANY
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PERSON COMMITTED TO THE CAUSE OF PEACE COULD BE ENTHUSIASTIC

ABOUT THIS GROUPING. HE EXPLAINED THAT THE RIGHTWING BLOC'S COMMITMENT TO RETENTION OF THE HISTORIC LAND OF ISRAEL CONSTITUTES A SERIOUS THREAT TO ISRAELI FLEXIBILITY. THIS EXPLAINED THE IMPORTANCE OF A STRONG SHOWING IN THE ELECTIONS FOR THE LABOR ALIGNMENT AND THE ILP.

5. KOL EXPRESSED HIS PERSONAL CONCERN REGARDING THE CONTINUATION OF THE PRESENT STATIC SITUATION WITHOUT NEGOTIATIONS. ISRAEL, IN HIS VIEW, COULD NOT JUST SIT BACK WITHOUT MAKING A SERIOUS EFFORT TO START THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS. A PROTRACTED PERIOD OF NO NEGOTIATIONS ENCOURAGED ISRAELIS TO BELIEVE THAT THEY COULD AFFORD TO WAIT FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP. HE HOPED, THEREFORE, THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER WOULD STIMULATE EARLY INITIATIVES WHICH MIGHT LEAD TO NEGOTIATIONS.

6. IN ANSWER TO MY QUERY WHETHER THE LABOR PARTY'S ADOPTION OF THE GALILI DOCUMENT CONSTITUTED AN IMPEDIMENT TO PEACE NEGOTIATIONS, KOL STATED THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THIS WAS THE CASE. HE SAID THAT HE AGREED WITH EBAN'S VIEW THAT THE DOCUMENT DOES NOT REPRESENT ANY CHANGE IN THE POLICY OF THE PRESENT GOVT AND THAT THIS WILL REMAIN SO AFTER THE ELECTIONS PROVIDED THE LEADERSHIP REMAINS UNCHANGED. KOL DID INDICATE, HOWEVER, THAT THERE ARE SOME "NUANCES" TO THE GALILI DOCUMENT WHICH MIGHT CREATE DIFFICULTIES LATER ON AND THAT IT COULD "MISEDUCATE" THE PUBLIC.

7. THE MINISTER ALSO STATED THAT THERE IS NO DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LABOR PARTY AND THE ILP ON THE NEED TO ENTER INTO PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH ANY PRIOR CONDITIONS.

8. LATER IN THE DAY I ALSO CALLED ON SOCIAL WELFARE MINISTER MICHAEL HAZANI OF THE NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY. (MEMCON FOLLOWS SEPARATELY.) CONCERNING THE ELECTIONS, HAZANI WOULD NOT MAKE ANY PREDICTIONS REGARDING HIS PARTY'S PROSPECTS BUT CLEARLY HE WAS OPTIMISTIC. (IF HAZANI'S OPTIMISM IS INDEED BORNE OUT BY EVENTS, THERE IS LITTLE LIKELIHOOD THAT ANY INDEPENDENT LIBERAL GAINS COULD BE SUFFICIENT TO OFFSET THE LEVERAGE OF THE NRP WITHIN THE NEXT COALITION AS KIL HOPED.) ALTHOUGH WE DID NOT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE GALILI DOCUMENT IN ANY DETAIL, HAZANI STATED THAT IN HIS VIEW IT WOULD NOT

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CLOSE OFF ANY GOI NEGOTIATING OPTIONS, AND THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL POLITICALLY IN THE ELECTIONS.
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